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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/656,597	09/05/2003	David C. Hovda	S-12	7953
21394 7590 01/03/2008 ARTHROCARE CORPORATION 7500 Rialto Boulevard Building Two, Suite 100 Austin, TX 78735-8532				
			EXAMINER PEFFLEY, MICHAEL F	
			ART UNIT 3739	PAPER NUMBER
			NOTIFICATION DATE 01/03/2008	DELIVERY MODE ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

intel_prop@arthrocare.com

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/656,597

Applicant(s)

HOVDA ET AL.

Examiner

Michael Peffley

Art Unit

3739

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 June 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-47 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-26 and 46 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) 27-45 and 47 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 1/26/04 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

Supplemental Action

It has come to the examiner's attention that claim 47, originally added with the amendment of July 19, 2006, has not been included in the rejection of the claims. The finality of the previous action is hereby vacated, and the instant Office action will address all claims currently pending.

Information Disclosure Statement

Applicant should note that the large number of references in the IDS of June 4, 2007 have been considered by the examiner in the same manner as other documents in Office search files are considered by the examiner while conducting a search of the prior art in a proper field of search. **See MPEP 609.05(b)**. Applicant is requested to point out any particular references in the IDS which they believe may be of particular relevance to the instant claimed invention in response to this office action.

Election/Restrictions

Claims 1-26 and 46 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made without traverse in the reply filed on 2/13/06.

Specification

The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: there is no brief drawing description for Figures 10I and 13E.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 27, 29, 30, 32-45 and 47 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Maguire et al. (US 6997925).

In figure 21A Maguire et al. disclose an electrosurgical device comprising a shaft having a distal portion; a return electrode (2130) at the distal portion of the shaft and having a return electrode surface area, the return electrode distally terminating in a tip portion; at least one active electrode (2126) at the distal portion of the shaft and having an active electrode surface area, the active electrode further comprising an arm portion being radially spaced from the return electrode, wherein the tip portion of the return electrode is distally spaced from the arm portion of the active electrode; and a connector located at the proximal portion of the shaft and adapted to couple the return electrode and each active electrode to respective poles of the high frequency power supply.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 28 and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maguire et al. Maguire et al. teach all of the limitations of the claims except the return electrode having a surface area greater than the active electrode and the raise surface area comprising a coil. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide the return electrode with a greater surface area than the active electrode and to provide a coil as the raised surface area since it has been held that changing the size and shape of the essential working parts of a device only involves routine skill in the art.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed July 19, 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues that Maguire fails to disclose, teach or suggest an active electrode comprising an arm portion radially spaced from the return electrode. According to Applicant, all of the elements of Maguire are disposed about a common radius and no element is provided at the center of the circle formed by the ablation elements. In figure 21A Maguire clearly illustrates an active electrode radially space from a return electrode. Regarding the argument that, the positive and negative ablation elements of Maguire fail to anticipate the active and return electrodes of the independent claims, see column 38 line 57 through column 39 line 14 of Maguire. It is noted that the Advisory Action of May 30, 2007 maintained the rejections were tenable

and that applicant's arguments were not persuasive. Applicant has not provided any claim amendments nor any new arguments with the RCE filed on June 4, 2007.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael Peffley whose telephone number is (571) 272-4770. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri from 7am-4pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Linda Dvorak can be reached on (571) 272-4764. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Michael Peffley/
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3739

/mp/
December 19, 2007